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OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A COMBATANT COMMANDER'S NUMBER ONE  
PRIORITY

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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3 February 2003

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## **Abstract**

Superior operational leadership is crucial for success in military actions. Without effective operational leadership, the bridge between strategic objectives and tactical objectives will collapse. Today's technology driven military infrastructure leads some military experts to incorrectly focus less on operational leadership and more on the military hardware and software as the keys to success on the battlefield.

While technology may distinguish warfare from era to era, the human element and operational leadership remain the common link. This paper will analyze the operational leadership qualities of General MacArthur during Operation Chromite, General Schwarzkopf during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, and General Clark during Operation Allied Force. It will not reconstruct the operations themselves, but rather analyze the operational leadership each commander displayed within the context of moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight and highlight its importance on the outcome of each operation. After examining these leadership traits and examples, it will demonstrate how operational leadership can be placed at the forefront of operational warfare to better prepare combatant commanders for the challenges of tomorrow's military.

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction	1
Technology and leadership	2
Moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight	3
MacArthur and Operation Chromite	5
Schwarzkopf and Operation Desert Shield/Storm	8
Clark and Operation Allied Force	11
Conclusion	14
Recommendations	16

## **Introduction**

Wars may be fought by weapons, but they are won by men. It is the spirit of the men who follow and the man who leads that gains victory.

General George S. Patton Jr.

General Patton clearly understood the importance of leadership in warfare. In today's digitized world, one may replace the word "technology" for "weapons" in Patton's quote to emphasize the importance of technological advancements. Regardless of the word used, the premise is simple enough; it is the human, not the machine that ensures victory. Military leadership, the human element, is the one constant throughout the history of warfare and will continue to be the common element in the future.

Operational commanders provide leadership by implementing the strategic-level objectives of the President and Secretary of Defense. They transform those objectives into tactical objectives for their component commanders through operational art.<sup>1</sup>

Operational commanders possess unique leadership styles, molded through years of experience and education, encompassing a variety of traits. Among many important leadership traits, the qualities of moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight are the most essential in future operational leadership. This paper will analyze these essential leadership qualities in General MacArthur during Operation Chromite, General Schwarzkopf during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, and General Clark during Operation Allied Force. After examining these leadership traits and examples, it will demonstrate how operational leadership can be placed at the forefront of operational warfare to better prepare combatant commanders for the challenges of tomorrow's military.

## **Technology and Leadership**

It is nearly impossible to read, watch or hear about modern warfare without being reminded of its awesome technological advancements. The experts harnessing this technological revolution have inundated us with an abundance of concepts and theories including Joint Vision 2010/2020 (JV 2010/2020), Network Centric Warfare (NCW), Information Technology 21 (IT21), Information Superiority Technology (IST), and Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) to name a few. Joint Vision 2020's goal is "full spectrum dominance – achieved through the interdependent application of dominant maneuver, precision engagement, focused logistics, and full dimensional protection."<sup>2</sup> All of these concepts attempt to ensure America's military dominance through this next century, but consistently fail to adequately identify the key to the success of their concepts, operational leadership.

NCW's vision is a network architecture incorporating sensor, information, and weapon technology into gridded zones to dramatically increase the military's lethality, speed, and situational awareness.<sup>3</sup> As difficult as that is to conceptualize, it is even harder to comprehend the lack of attention NCW proponents give to operational leadership. NCW experts go as far as proposing that NCW will lead to a 'reduced or non-existent role' for the operational level commander.<sup>4</sup> Replacing the operational commander with networked tacticians will increase what Clausewitz calls the "fog of war" by removing the very source of operational art. Clausewitz ridiculed theoreticians who removed moral values from theory, only dealing with material and reducing warfare to a pair of mathematical equations of balance and superiority in time and space.<sup>5</sup>

Gene Meyers from U.S. Joint Forces Command, while acknowledging that technology plays a significant role in JV 2020, notes that it places an even greater importance on the “development of doctrine, organizations, training, education, leaders and people...”<sup>6</sup> However, he too misses the point as he continues to comment that: “it is no coincidence that doctrine is placed at the head of the list...” because doctrine is most important.<sup>7</sup> Should not ‘leaders and people’ be ‘coincidentally’ placed at the head of the list, rightfully demonstrating the importance of leadership? People provide the vision for doctrine, not the other way around.

Operational leadership needs more focus in the aforementioned concepts and theories. These technology driven concepts place operational leadership as an afterthought, when in fact, its importance and implications deserve much more discussion. Within that context, those discussions should center on the qualities of moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight.

### **Moral courage, unrelenting will and foresight**

Operational leadership encompasses numerous characteristics and traits which collectively enable the operational commander to clearly envision the grand design for military actions through the lens of operational art. Some of these traits include integrity, intellect, determination, presence of mind, loyalty, trust, creativity, and sound judgment. These traits are not exclusive of each other. Each is interwoven in the personality and intellect of every operational leader in their own unique way. Three traits which are imperative for the operational commander in shaping the battlespace are moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight.

Courage takes two forms, physical courage and moral courage. Collectively, they minimize fear and maximize sound judgment under pressure.<sup>8</sup> Physical courage is the conscious choice to risk personal injury, a risk that is inherent in the military service. Moral courage invokes an intangible quality. The joint pub describes moral courage as “competent risk taking and tenacity and includes the willingness to stand up for what one believes to be right, accepting full responsibility.”<sup>9</sup> Moral courage involves the intellect, the courage of a commander’s convictions and intent.<sup>10</sup> Moral courage is essential in establishing trust in subordinates’ abilities to execute their operational commander’s guidance. It is the heart of the doctrinal philosophy of centralized command and decentralized execution. Today’s high tech weapons invariably reinforce a perception to the public of 100% accuracy and zero collateral damage. The combination of high tech weapons and the ‘CNN effect’ will test the moral courage of operational commanders whose every targeting decision may be scrutinized real time by their military superiors, politicians, and public alike.

Clausewitz wrote that a strong will overcomes friction and breaks down obstacles. An unrelenting will matches great determination with intellect. An operational commander must exert his unrelenting will upon his forces to ensure unity of effort to meet his operational objectives. Adversity, obstacles, changes, friction, and the fog of war cannot be overcome without an operational commander’s unrelenting will. An operational commander’s will should not only be transmitted to the demise of his enemy, but also to the convictions and drive of his own forces. Opposition and discontent from his own forces and allies are quite often the most damaging to a commander’s strategy.<sup>11</sup> With the reduction in forces common among most every nation today, coalition forces



will continue to develop into the armies of the future. Operational leaders will need to demonstrate an unrelenting will to ensure unity of effort is maintained in tomorrow's coalition force configurations.

Foresight is crucial in enabling the operational commander the vision to master the complexities of operational art. Without foresight, the operational commander is ineffective. He needs foresight to shape the battlespace; otherwise he will be simply reacting to the enemy's actions.<sup>12</sup> Foresight enables the operational commander to properly incorporate the principles of war into his master plan.<sup>13</sup> Foresight ensures the operational commander is effectively judging and balancing the ends, ways, and means of his forces to ensure his objectives can be met. He anticipates sources of friction, and is ready to resynchronize the movement and maneuvers of his forces.

### **MacArthur and Operation Chromite**

He was a thundering paradox of a man, noble and ignoble, inspiring and outrageous, arrogant and shy, the best of men and the worst of men, the most protean, most ridiculous, and most sublime.<sup>14</sup>

General Douglas MacArthur's career spanned nearly half of a century, beginning with his graduation from West Point in 1903 until his retirement from the U.S. Army in 1951 following his relief as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers by President Truman. MacArthur is not an easy man to figure out. His unique persona often contradicts itself, but nevertheless shapes his leadership style like no other American military leader. Geoffrey Perret describes him as "infuriatingly vain, was egotistical, was fascinated by himself," yet "not in the deepest sense ego-driven."<sup>15</sup> MacArthur's unyielding willpower enabled him to ascend to the highest ranks of the military, imposing strategy and policy at the highest levels of American government.<sup>16</sup> That unyielding will, along with incredible

foresight, empowered his plan for Operation Chromite, the dominating Allied amphibious assault at Inchon on 15 September, 1950 that reshaped the Korean War.

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1950, the North Korean People's Army (NKPA) launched a surprise attack against their South Korean neighbors, the Republic of Korea (ROK). The NKPA smashed through the grossly unprepared ROK defense, marching past the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and into the South Korean capital of Seoul by the 28<sup>th</sup> of June. At the time of the invasion, MacArthur was Supreme Commander, Allied Powers, commander in chief, Far East and commanding general, U.S. Army, Far East. During this time, MacArthur was more interested in the details of the Japanese occupation and, like most everyone in the region, was shocked by the actions of the NKPA.<sup>17</sup> Acting quickly to assuage any doubts and fears the South Koreans may have possessed about American (and Allied) resolve, MacArthur left his headquarters in Tokyo to see the front lines of the Korean War himself. It was not uncommon for MacArthur to display great, sometimes reckless courage as operational commander. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, he flew into the city of Suwon (20 miles south of Seoul) where he helped stabilize the "jittery nerves" of the South Korean leaders among fresh craters and wreckage.<sup>18</sup> The genesis of MacArthur's vision for Operation Chromite began during this visit to Suwon.<sup>19</sup> It was here that his far reaching foresight envisioned an amphibious assault, an operational maneuver designed to cut off the North Koreans in the heart of their forces.<sup>20</sup>

MacArthur's tremendous moral courage was never more evident than during the months preceding the assault. Critics thought the idea of the assault was impossible, almost suicidal. In fact, MacArthur himself admitted that success at Inchon was a "5000-1 gamble", but he knew the odds were much worse with any other course of action.<sup>21</sup>

The idea of an amphibious assault, let alone use of Marines, was preposterous to some of the highest leaders in government following World War II. President Truman lamented the Marines, as did Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Chairman General Omar Bradley when he testified before an armed services committee in 1949: “I am wondering whether we shall ever have another large scale amphibious operation. Frankly, the atomic bomb, properly delivered, almost precludes such a possibility.”<sup>22</sup>

MacArthur’s bold plan began to take form in the following weeks, but he knew he was going to have to demonstrate an unrelenting will to overcome tremendous obstacles, both politically and logistically, while convincing his commanders. MacArthur foresaw the requirement for unity of effort through a joint operation, stating that “Unless provision is made for the full utilization of the Army-Navy-Air team in this shattered area, our mission will be needlessly costly in life, money and prestige. At worst, it might even be doomed to failure.”<sup>23</sup> However, the Marine forces were not readily available. The Marine Corps had been severely stripped down since the end of World War II, as well as the Navy’s amphibious assault fleet, resulting in MacArthur bombarding the JCS with requests for a division of Marines and associated naval craft.<sup>24</sup> The JCS obliged, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division was brought to wartime strength, utilizing reserves and personnel from Marine units at home and overseas.<sup>25</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division would be a part of the hastily assembled X Corps.

As late as August 23<sup>rd</sup>, when MacArthur held a strategic conference with the primary commanders, doubts about his plan resonated among his constituents. The arguments included the fact that the tide and terrain made for an extremely hazardous landing site (the tide differential was the second largest in the world).<sup>26</sup> The Navy also

noted that the attacks would have to be centered at the area most advantageous for the North Korean resistance due to structures and terrain. Admiral Sherman, Chief of Naval Operations, stated that “If every possible geographical and naval handicap were listed, Inchon had ‘em all.”<sup>27</sup>

Most all of the experts said it could not be done. All the factors of space pointed to a landing at a location other than Inchon. Not only were thousands of lives at stake, but the future of the Allied effort in Korea was pending on the outcome of Operation Chromite. His moral courage was tested, but MacArthur’s unyielding will enabled him to convince his forces to see his vision, his foresight for success at Inchon.

### **Schwarzkopf and Operation Desert Shield/Storm**

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf came into view for most of the world on their television sets as they tuned into CNN and saw him speaking as the Commander in Chief, Central Command (CINCCENTCOM) during Operation Desert Shield in 1990. His military career up to that point was not unlike his peers, working his way up the Army ranks. He was a larger than life figure, never hesitant to gain some exposure. Experiences of indifferent and callous leadership during his second tour in Vietnam drained his patience and marked the beginning of his violent temper episodes, earning him the nickname “Stormin Norman.”<sup>28</sup> Few in the Army felt neutral about him as he was known as a warrior to his admirers, but a bully who commanded through intimidation according to his detractors.<sup>29</sup> He began his assignment as CINCCENTCOM in November 1988 and less than two years later, his operational leadership skills would face the ultimate challenge as he led the largest build-up, and eventual employment of coalition military forces since World War II.<sup>30</sup>

After the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait on August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1990, General Schwarzkopf assumed command of the coalition forces in the Persian Gulf region. He was responsible for establishing a defensive posture (Operation Desert Shield) in protection of coalition forces and interests, in particular, Saudi Arabia. From August 1990 until the beginning of the offensive attack (Operation Desert Storm) in mid-January, Schwarzkopf balanced the mobilization of forces, the logistical movement into Persian Gulf Theater, the planning and implementing a defensive posture, as well as planning for the eventual attack against Iraq.

Schwarzkopf saw major flaws in the U.S. military during his involvement in operations in Grenada in 1983. The brief conflict revealed that despite huge military advantages: “we displayed an abysmal lack of accurate intelligence, major deficiencies in communications, flare-ups of interservice rivalry, interference by higher headquarters in battlefield decisions, our alienation of the press, and more.”<sup>31</sup> He kept these deficiencies in the forefront as he prepared a technologically superior coalition force against the Iraqi military. The superiority was not only in weaponry, but information advancements linking the command structure through phone networks, internet and e-mail, and satellite technology. He knew strong, decisive leadership that promoted unity of effort, centralized command and decentralized execution was the only way to manage the advanced information network; a philosophy he exercised superbly in maintaining harmony among Arab and Western members.<sup>32</sup>

That harmony did not go unchallenged, but Schwarzkopf’s unrelenting will was effective in maintaining the unity of the coalition. Launching an attack from Saudi soil, the Saudis naturally bore sensitivities as to who would have command of the coalition

forces once an attack commenced. Schwarzkopf ensured he had final approval for all military actions, but reassured his counterpart, Lieutenant General Khalid bin Sultan, that unity of effort would not be compromised in the parallel command scheme.<sup>33</sup> Also, his leadership ensured the Syrians, who did not want to be directly involved in an offensive ground attack against Iraq, remained an integral fighting force within the coalition.<sup>34</sup> He resolved this by placing the Syrians in reserve behind the Egyptians, and any fighting the Syrians performed could be seen as defending fellow Arabs, the Egyptians.<sup>35</sup>

He placed enormous confidence in his field commanders, giving them tremendous flexibility.<sup>36</sup> His confidence in his commanders was never more evident when he resisted an 11<sup>th</sup> hour recommendation from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Gray, to replace his Marine Component Commander, General Boomer. Gray doubted Boomer's abilities, but in the end, Boomer's understanding of the Iraqis was much better than Gray anticipated and Schwarzkopf's moral courage paid off.<sup>37</sup>

Throughout the operations, Schwarzkopf generally worked well with General Colin Powell, Chairman of the JCS. A source of friction within the coalition leaders was setting a date to begin the ground war. A myriad of factors played into this decision, including the measured effectiveness of the air campaign on Iraqi defenses, logistical readiness of the ground forces, weather, and political pressures from some of members of the administration.<sup>38</sup> Weeks earlier, Schwarzkopf had agreed on an attack date of 24 February, but due to weather considerations and logistical issues with the Marines, he proposed to delay the attack until the 26th.<sup>39</sup> Powell was furious, explaining that "My president wants to get on with this thing. My secretary wants to get on with it. We need to get on with it."<sup>40</sup> A test of Schwarzkopf's moral courage was evident as he was being

pressured into a militarily unsound decision, needlessly endangering lives and assets, due to political pressures. In the end, the weather did break and the attack did commence on the 24th, but not without testing Schwarzkopf's leadership.

Schwarzkopf's vision of the overall strategy for Operation Desert Storm was successful, but his foresight did miss the mark on at least one occasion. One major oversight was failing to recognize indications of a vulnerable Iraqi army after repelling an Iraqi advance at Khafji on 29<sup>th</sup> January.<sup>41</sup> The ease with which the coalition ground and air forces punished the Iraqis demonstrated the weakness of their position as well as vulnerability to air attack.<sup>42</sup> Schwarzkopf should have recognized this as an indication to restructure the sequencing and synchronization of his ground attack.<sup>43</sup> The Coalition land offensive was not to commence for another three weeks. Nevertheless, in failing to adjust his attack plan, the majority of the Iraqi Republican Guard was able to flee north unscathed once the land war began.

### **Clark and Operation Allied Force**

General Wesley K. Clark took over as Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command (CINCEUR) and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) in July 1997. Clark graduated first in his West Point class in 1966, beginning his long list of educational successes throughout his military career.<sup>44</sup> He has been described by some of his contemporaries as brilliant, a master of military and political sciences, arrogant and stubborn.<sup>45</sup> These characteristics came into play in his job as SACEUR when he led NATO forces during Operation Allied Force; a combat operation conducted in and around the Serbian province of Kosovo between March and June, 1999.

Operation Allied Force was initiated to oppose the Serbian oppression of ethnic Kosovo Albanians, led by Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic. Milosevic's Serbian forces re-initiated their ethnic cleansing actions against the Albanians in March 1999, resulting in the U.S. and NATO initiating a 78 day air campaign against Serbian targets. As CINCEUR, Clark answered to the President of the United States while as SACEUR, he led the NATO forces and reported to Javier Solana, NATO Secretary General. With the immense political and military dynamics emerging from the 19 nations of NATO, and the political pressures from the Clinton administration, Clark's leadership qualities, especially those of moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight, were challenged daily.

The nature of the air campaign challenged Clark in a variety of ways. Technology gave Clark unprecedented access to battlespace information through video tele-conferencing, secret e-mail, and improved satellite television and telephone capabilities. One of the biggest leadership challenges for Clark was executing the centralized command, decentralized execution doctrine with his senior air commander, General Michael Short. Clark freely admitted his shortcomings: "Many times I found myself working further down in the details than I would have preferred, in an effort to generate the attack effectiveness against the ground forces that I knew we needed."<sup>46</sup> General Short found Clark's lack of faith unacceptable. Short recalled an instance where Clark noticed three tanks on a world-wide net live broadcast and immediately had him on the phone asking Short to "go and kill them."<sup>47</sup> Short continued: "Wesley Clark drove me crazy as a micromanager" and reduced our ability to effectively execute our mission.<sup>48</sup> Technology made it infinitely easier for Clark to delve into the tactical realm of the operation. Clark's moral courage should have overcome his micromanaging, but it



did not. Ultimately, Clark's micromanaging did not change the final outcome of the operation, but it certainly affected the morale of his subordinates and contributed to inefficiencies which prolonged the operation.

One of Clark's greatest challenges was maintaining unity of effort within the NATO alliance. Politically, the horror of Milosevic's ethnic cleansing provided enough reason for the 19 NATO countries to maintain their resolve during the operation. However, the myriad of other complexities including military interoperability, targeting decisions, and the inherent friction between cooperating nations required a leader with gifted diplomatic skills and an indomitably strong will. General Clark deserves significant credit for this. Some note that he has received "far less credit than he deserves for keeping the alliance together".<sup>49</sup> President Clinton, who developed a less than cordial relationship with Clark during the operation admitted that he was "a little surprised that we had no more problems than we did in maintaining our allied unity..."<sup>50</sup> As evidenced, Clark's unrelenting will to maintain the focus of the alliance ensured a strong unity of effort over the course of the operation.

Coming up with the correct vision for shaping the battlespace in Allied Force proved extremely difficult for Clark. Months prior to the operation, he decided to plan air strikes that would be "coercive in nature, following the Bosnia model..."<sup>51</sup> Clark's staff predicted this would force Milosevic to halt operations within a few days. Rather than pushing for action *decisive* in nature early on, Clark set the precedent for subsequent plans. As a result, this strategy developed into a limited bombing campaign, incrementally escalated over 78 days vice the few days as initially thought. The Clinton administration was a strong influence behind the strategy.<sup>52</sup> Despite the political

pressures, Clark's misguided foresight played a role in the development of the limited air war strategy that was utilized for the operation. He also was at odds with Short and other Coalition partners on what 'center of gravity' to focus their attacks. Short and his fellow air commanders wanted to concentrate on the Serbian command and control (C2) structure in Belgrade but Clark insisted on focusing on the Serb forces in Kosovo.<sup>53</sup> Coalition forces had limited success in attacking the Serbian army in Kosovo for a number of reasons; poor weather, difficulty in identifying and tracking troop movements, and a challenging topography headed the list. Despite this, Clark maintained his belief that the focus of the air strikes should remain on the Serbian forces in Kosovo. At a minimum, Clark should have better allocated the coalition air assets in a way which placed decisive strikes on both centers of gravity. Eventually, the focus of the attacks included C2 targets in Belgrade, but the precedent had been set. As a result and similar to his moral courage/micromanaging dilemma, Clark's poor foresight helped prolong the air operation beyond the "few days" as predicted.

### **Conclusion**

Operational leadership, like operational warfare, is not a science but an art. There is no recipe to ensure success at the operational level. MacArthur's, Schwarzkopf's, and Clark's experiences provide excellent examples with which to demonstrate why operational leadership, led with moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight, is the most important facet in military action.

MacArthur's leadership in Operation Chromite highlighted tremendous foresight in envisioning the Inchon invasion. His ferocious, unrelenting will and steadfast moral courage convinced his fellow allied leaders of his plan and made the successful landing a

reality, turning the tide (albeit temporarily) in the Korean War. Forty years later, Schwarzkopf took the “AirLand Battle”<sup>54</sup> into Iraq, armed with a technologically superior coalition force. His unrelenting will enabled him to maintain a unity of effort within his fragile coalition. His tremendous moral courage enabled him to promote a centralized command, decentralized execution structure. Unfortunately, his lack of foresight in resynchronizing his attack plan after the Khafji battle allowed the Iraqi Republican Guard to flee and fight another day. Most recently, Clark took control of the most sophisticated array of forces the world has ever seen in Operation Allied Force. His unrelenting will ensured the NATO alliance remained focused and resolved. However, his moral courage failed to withstand the temptation exacerbated by modern technology in the micromanagement of his forces. In addition, his lack of foresight led to an extended, limited air war, vice a strategy based on decisive air strikes aimed at the enemy’s centers of gravity.

As technology advances, operational commanders will continue to gain infinitely greater access to information. Operational commanders must have the moral courage to avoid the tendency to execute orders on the tactical level on behalf of their component commanders. With the United States expecting to deploy with other nations in future conflicts, operational commanders will have to rely on an unrelenting will to maintain unity of effort to ensure success. The speed of modernization will require operational commanders with far reaching insight to creatively foresee the optimum employment of their forces. Failure of operational leaders to embrace these ‘essential’ traits against a more formidable adversary could lead to damaging results and possibly defeat.

Why did Schwarzkopf's foresight misguide him and why did Clark fall short in terms of moral courage and foresight? Would MacArthur have fared better in Operation Allied Force? The answers are not found in subjective 'what if' hypotheses, but rather point to the military culture's misguided shift in emphasis. As demonstrated earlier, operational leadership has taken a backseat to technological theories and advancements. The military must stop the trend of developing leaders in a culture which centers on technological advancements vice the human element of operational leadership. Not that MacArthur was without fault, but maybe Schwarzkopf and certainly Clark would have fared better if they developed their leadership qualities in a military that puts the human element before the machine.

When speaking of leadership, Clausewitz reminded us that "the moral factors are the precious metal, the real weapon, the finely honed blade."<sup>55</sup> His moral factors refer to what I call the essential character traits; moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight. A revival emphasizing the importance of operational leadership and these three essential traits should represent the next big revolution in military affairs, not another technology driven RMA. This will return operational leadership to the forefront of all military discussions and ensure victory for the next generation.

### **Recommendations**

How do we ensure our future operational leaders have the right stuff, the essential qualities? These recommendations focus on improving the operational leadership awareness, training, and opportunities as a whole. Within that structure is how the essential qualities of moral courage, unrelenting will, and foresight should be emphasized and developed.

1. A mindset change throughout the military needs to begin today. Operational leadership must be promoted as the leading facet of successful military operations, not as an afterthought. Innovators should ensure future concepts like JV 2020, NCW, and RMA *begin* their discussions with operational leadership implications. Leadership should not be relegated to a subset of their theories or concepts, let alone ignored completely.

2. War college curriculum should include more dedicated sessions and discussions on operational leadership, particularly in the Joint Military Operations (JMO) course. Currently, only one session is dedicated to operational leadership. The current JMO book, Operational Warfare, the operational leadership chapter is buried in the back of the book. Bring the chapter and the discussions to the forefront. Operational leadership should be presented at the very beginning of the course, discussing in detail case studies and emphasizing the challenges operational commanders will face with the technological advancements.

3. War gaming, designed to place officers into operational leadership roles, should emphasize the leadership challenges that technology creates. This war gaming should be introduced at an earlier level in the officer's career. Introducing these war gaming scenarios at an earlier time (pre-department head) would build the foundation of an officer's appreciation for operational level decision-making process, and ultimately, operational leadership fundamentals.

4. Joint doctrine should include more in-depth discussions on operational leadership. There is no single definition for operational leadership in any joint publication. If operational art, although difficult to quantify, is clearly defined in the pubs, operational leadership should be as well. Operational leadership challenges

relating to coalition forces and information superiority advancements need to be discussed in greater detail in the joint pubs.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Milan Vego, Operational Warfare, (Newport, RI: U.S. Naval War College, 2000), 561. Operational leadership pertains to those levels of command responsible for accomplishing political and military strategic objectives assigned by the national or alliance/coalition leadership through the application of operational art.

<sup>2</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Vision 2020," Joint Forces Quarterly, (Summer 2000): 60.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur K. Cebrowski and John J. Garstka, "Network Centric Warfare: Its Origin and Future," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, (January 1998): 28-35.

<sup>4</sup> Erik J. Dahl, Network Centric Warfare and the Death of Operational Art (U.S. Naval War College, Newport, RI, n.d.), 11.

<sup>5</sup> Milan Vego, "Net-centric is Not Decisive," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, (January 2003): 53.

<sup>6</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, 59.

<sup>7</sup> Gene Myers, "Concepts to Future Doctrine," A Common Perspective, (April 2002): 6.

<sup>8</sup> Robert L. Taylor and William E. Rosenbach, Military Leadership (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 46.

<sup>9</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine Capstone and Keystone Primer (Washington, DC: 10 September, 2001), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Vego, Operational Warfare, 564.

<sup>11</sup> James H. Buck and Lawrence J. Korb, Military Leadership (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1981), 212.

<sup>12</sup> Vego, 565.

<sup>13</sup> Principles of war, as described in Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Pub 3.0 are mass, objective, offensive, security, economy of force, maneuver, unity of command, surprise, and simplicity.

<sup>14</sup> William Manchester, American Caesar (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1978): 3.

<sup>15</sup> Geoffrey Perret, Old Soldiers Never Die (New York: Random House, 1996): 588.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 589.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 538.

<sup>18</sup> Shelby L. Stanton, America's Tenth Legion (Novato: Presidio Press, 1989): 24.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 111. Operation Chromite would take place at Inchon, a harbor positioned over 100 miles behind enemy lines, in attempt to cut off NKPA's lines of communication and logistics with a double enveloping maneuver, synchronized with the Eighth Army's thrust northward from the south in Pusan. The Operation also served to recapture Seoul and to reinstall the displaced South Korean President Rhee back into his city as both a political and strategic symbol. In fact, MacArthur insisted on maintaining the bridge over the Han River leading into Seoul so the official party could drive into the city for the ceremony, vice giving the appearance of an isolated city if they used a helicopter.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Smith, MacArthur in Korea (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982): 71.

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<sup>22</sup> Trumbull Higgins, Korea and the Fall of MacArthur (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960): 42.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>24</sup> Stanton, 37.

<sup>25</sup> Stanton, 38.

<sup>26</sup> Douglas MacArthur, Reminiscences (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 348.

<sup>27</sup> MacArthur, 348.

<sup>28</sup> Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, The General's War (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1995), 41.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 41.

<sup>30</sup> John Pimlott and Stephen Badsey, The Gulf War Assessed (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1992), 83.

<sup>31</sup> Norman H. Schwarzkopf and Peter Petre, It Doesn't Take a Hero (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 258.

<sup>32</sup> Gordon, xiii.

<sup>33</sup> Schwarzkopf, 373.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 403.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 403.

<sup>36</sup> Gordon, 66.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 177.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 307.

<sup>39</sup> Colin L. Powell, My American Journey (New York: Random House, 1995), 517.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 517.

<sup>41</sup> Pimlott, 190.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 190.

<sup>43</sup> The Marines and Saudis would initiate the ground war pushing north into Kuwait, followed one day later by the main army attack with a single envelopment arm from the west, hoping to surprise and trap the Iraqi Republican Guard. However, the weakened Iraqi position in Kuwait would allow the marines to push back the Iraqi defenses beyond a point where the main army could successfully engage as they pushed out a day later. By not adjusting his strategy and pushing his main army's advance earlier, the majority of the Republican Guard escaped north in Iraq. This strategic oversight may not have occurred if Schwarzkopf had designated an overall commander for the coalition ground forces, freeing himself up from the detailed planning requirements of the ground attack plans

<sup>44</sup> Wesley K. Clark, Waging Modern War (New York: PublicAffairs, 2001), 20.

<sup>45</sup> David Halbertstam, War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals (New York: Scribner, 2001), 212.

<sup>46</sup> Clark, 245.



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<sup>47</sup> Michael C. Short “An Airman’s Lessons From Kosovo” in From Maneuver Warfare to Kosovo, ed. John Andreas Olsen (taken from a speech given to the Royal Norwegian Air Force Academy, 2001), 258.

<sup>48</sup> Short, 285.

<sup>49</sup> Timothy L. Thomas, “Kosovo and the Myth of Information Superiority.” Parameters (Spring, 2000), 13.

<sup>50</sup> Ivo H. Daadler and Michael E. O’Hanlon, Winning Ugly: NATO’s War to Save Kosovo (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 164.

<sup>51</sup> Clark, 122.

<sup>52</sup> Daadler, 211.

<sup>53</sup> Short, 271.

<sup>54</sup> Pimlott, 67. The “AirLand Battle” was the first American doctrine directed specifically at the operational level of war. This doctrine focused on utilizing advanced technology and computerized communication to synchronize air mobility, air power and ground forces to strike near and deep while conducting offensive operations against the enemy rear. The four key concepts included initiative, depth, agility, and synchronization.

<sup>55</sup> Werner W. Banish, “Leadership at the Operational Level.” Army (August, 1987): 53.

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